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ABSTRACT

Focusing on the exceptional child, this symposium contains a study which reports findings concerning the adjustment problems of the Malaysian visually handicapped student, by Chua Tee Tee, an abstract on adjustment and personality patterns in normal and problem children by Gurvinder Kaur Khaneja and Gopa Bharawaj, and an abstract of a study on contradictions within the self-concept of mentally retarded children, by Vasantha R. Patri. Findings concerning the visually handicapped Malaysian youth indicate that, as a group, they appear to have no serious emotional-social problems; more youth profess favorable than unfavorable behavioral traits. Because a sufficient number have some adjustment problems, remedial action appears warranted. With some exceptions, findings of the study comparing maladjusted and normal female adolescent students' adjustment and personality supported the hypotheses that adjustment and personality would emerge as two separate and distinct factors in both groups, adjustment and personality factors would show different correlation patterns in normal and problem children, and overall personality and adjustment scores of problem children would be different from those of normal children. The study of retarded children's self-concepts found significant differences in self-concepts of normal and retarded subjects; retarded youth tended to evaluate themselves more negatively than did normal youth and their self-concepts contained significantly more contradictions; the degree of contradiction was negatively related to intelligence level. (RH)

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SYMPOSIUM II C : The Special Child

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Adjustment and Personality Patterns in Normal and Problem Children **

Gurvinder Kaur Khaneja and Gopa Bharawaj

The present investigation was carried out to find the relationship between adjustment and personality of normal and problem children. The hypothesis set up were:

Hypothesis 1: Adjustment and personality will emerge as two separate and distinct factors in both groups.
Hypothesis 2: Adjustment factor and personality factor will show different correlation patterns in normal and problem children.
Hypothesis 3: Overall scores of problem children in both areas of personality and adjustment will be different from that of normal children.

The sample consisted of 40 normal female students and 60 maladjusted female students. The ages of the subjects ranged from 13 to 15 years. These categories of normal and maladjusted students were based on their academic records, report books, medical reports and biographical data.

Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire was used to measure personality dimensions of the students while Bell's Adjustment Inventory was used to assess the student's adjustment.

The questionnaire and inventory were administered in two sessions during regular class meetings. Results of the research are:

(1) When personality factors were compared with adjustments, significant differences were observed.

(2) In normal and problem children, home and health adjustment remained as separate and distinct factors. No significant differences were observed in emotional adjustments in both groups of subjects.

(3) Normal and problem children showed different trends where social adjustment and personality came out as two different factors but in the normal group of children, these two variables did not appear as separate factors.

(4) Home and health adjustment was not correlated to personality variables for both normal and problem children. In relation to emotional and social adjustment, there were some correlation with personality variables for normal children but correlation was negligible for problem children.

(5) For all the factors of adjustment, the means of problem children were always higher than those of normal children. The means of the personality variables showed a similar trend.

Adjustment Problems of the Visually Handicapped*

Chua Tee Tee

INTRODUCTION

This study represents an exploratory attempt to measure the emotional and social adjustment of visually-handicapped adolescents in Malaysia. Many writings in the past have been for the most part highly speculative and descriptive, and earlier studies on the emotional and social aspects of blindness have been hampered by serious conceptual and methodological problems (Cown *et al.*, 1961).[1] Recent studies, however, have been based on more appropriate concepts of adjustment including the *unfortunate person, minority group status, marginality* or *overlapping psychological roles,* and *new psychological situations,* and research methodology has now included personal interview methods, direct behavioural assessments and longitudinal studies.

PRUPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of the current study is three-fold:

(1) Assess the self-concept of visually handicapped school students in a special residential school in Kuala Lumpur;

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(2) Identify the number of students with good adjustment and poor adjustment behavioural traits;
(3) Study the extent of self-concept discrepancy which may be defined as the difference (if any) between self-concept and the concept of the way a person would like to be.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is a paucity of local empirical research on this subject. A study of 31 visually handicapped students schooling in three regular secondary schools in Malaysia seems to suggest that they 'socialise well' both with sighted and also with their visually handicapped peers (Filmer Jr., 1982).[2]

A related problem area of adjustment for the visually handicapped is in the attitude of sighted people towards the blind. Based on a questionnaire survey of 38 nurses attending a Public Health Course in Kuala Lumpur, the devaluating and negative attitudes of the sighted public towards blind people have been confirmed (Chua, 1972).[3] About 87% of the nurses agree that the worst thing about blindness is the attitude of the sighted towards the blind rather than the sheer loss of vision; half of them doubt that they can ever be really happy if they are blind; 60% believe that certain jobs should be set aside for blind persons where they do not have to complete with sighted people; 45% advocate sheltered workshops for them and about two-thirds would avoid using the word 'blind' while talking to a person who is blind. Fallacies are also confirmed in the study. About half the number of nurses believe that people who are born blind tend to develop similar traits, more than half of them think that the blind have universal musical gifts while 42% hold the view that 'a few blind people are more susceptible to mental illness than the sighted.' The lack of counselling facilities for the visually handicapped in Malaysia, as part of the adjustment process, has also been highlighted (Chua, 1980).[4]

A few related research studies have been conducted in the Philippines. In 1965, Capeda[5] investigated into local Filipino attitudes toward blindness and found that the incidence of rejection observed in responses of mothers of sighted pupils was significantly higher than that found in responses of mothers of blind pupils. Also the incidence of aggression observed in responses of mothers of blind pupils was significantly higher than that found in responses of mothers of sighted pupils. Capeda in that study has also found that the 'more common Asian situation where the pattern of the family with a blind child is to hide the blind even from the view of the closet relations, regarding that child as evidence of guilt, sin, and punishment' as existed in Pakistan (Grant, 1963)[6] does not apply in the Philippines context (Philippines, 1966)[7].

Tormon (1968)[8], in his investigation into the integration of visually impaired children in the regular class in the Philippines, concludes that 'the blind and other visually-handicapped children can perform almost

all the activities of the sighted.' This generalised statement concurs with western research findings 'that, except for the area of arithmetic computation, the blind equalled the normally sighted of their grade level' (Hurder, 1973)[9].

In his investigation of sex education at the Philippines National School for the Blind, Rosell (1971)[10] concluded that 'the allegation that blind adults in a residential school tend to develop homosexuality can now be questioned.' However, the writer cautions about the findings of this particular study as the sample used was extremely small as it was made up of only 5 boys and 5 girls.

INSTRUMENTATION

A modified form of the 'Self-Ideal Sort Items with Direction of Adjustment' developed by Cowen *et al.* (1961)[11] has been used. This instrument has the following advantages:

(1) It is appropriate for use by a visually handicapped sample as well as by a sighted one.

(2) It measures self-perceptions and self-regarding attitudes which help to determine the nature of adjustment.

(3) The 60 self-sort items are made up of 10 groups of 6 items each, 3 'good adjustment' and 3 'poor adjustment' items thus, making a total of 30 'good adjustment' and 30 'poor adjustment items. Each subject has been asked to rate each item on a 5-point scale, i.e. '5' if the statement is most like him and '1' if the statement is least like him and '3' if he is not sure.

(4) The 60 self-sort items are subsequently used as ideal-sort items, again rated on a 5-point scale i.e. '5' if the statement is *most* like the subject's ideal person, '1' if the statement is *least* like the subject's ideal person and '3' if the subject is not sure. The discrepancy measure is determined by summing, without respect to sign, the absolute differences for the full series of ratings between self-concept and ideal-self. The higher the discrepancy score, the greater is the assumed conflict and tension and the more maladjusted the respondents.

The questionnaire appears in both *Bahasa Malaysia* (Malay Language) and English. For the sample of blind students, it is provided in braille form. They are to mark the appropriate items in pencil without revealing their names.

SAMPLE

A total of 59 (55.1%) out of 107 visually handicapped students at the residential Setapak Secondary School for the Blind, Kuala Lumpur, completed the two questionnaires. This represents about 32% of the total

visually-handicapped population in secondary schools in Peninsular Malaysia. The relatively low percentage of participation was due to the following:

(1) The school authorities thought that the questionnaire administration would take place on 31.1.84 instead of on 30.1.84.
(2) Absenteeism was probably higher because the Chinese New Year holidays fell in that week.
(3) Questionnaire forms returned by nine students had to be rejected because most of the items were not marked.

The sample is made up of about two-thirds male, about 80% Malays and 19% Chinese, 71.2% aged 12–17 years, 59.3% in the lower secondary, 52.5% with total loss of vision or with light perception only, and just over a third schooling in regular sighted schools with the rest in the residential special school (Table 1).

Table 1

Nature of Visually Handicapped Students Responding To the Questionnaires (N = 59)

Sex	Male	40	(67.8%)
	Female	19	(32.2%)
Ethnicity	Malay	47	(79.7%)
	Chinese	11	(18.6%)
	Indian	1	(1.7%)
	Other	0	
Age (years)	12–14	6	(10.2%)
	15–17	36	(61.0%)
	18–20	17	(28.8%)
	21 and above	0	
Grade	Lower secondary (Form I–III)	35	(59.3%)
	Upper secondary (Form IV–V)	24	(40.7%)
Amount of Vision	Total loss or light perception only	31	(52.5%)
	Partial/travel vision	28	(47.5%)
Type of Schooling	Residential Special	38	(64.4%)
	Integrated	21	(35.6%)

DATA ANALYSIS

The responses to the 60 self-sort questionnaire items together with variables on sex, ethnicity, age, level of schooling, amount of visual loss and type of schooling were subjected to a frequency count. Subjects who rate themselves as '4' and '5' on a particular item are assumed to have the particular behavioural trait while those who mark '1' and '2' are assumed to have an absence or a lack of that behavioural trait. Those who mark '3' are considered to be non-commital and are included with those who have not responded to the item (marked '0' in the computer printout).

The discrepancy (if any) in responses to the self-sort and ideal-sort items has been computed manually using the completed computer cards. For this purpose, '0' on the computer card is given a '3' rating.

FINDINGS

Self-Concept

As indicated in Table 2 for Group I items, the blind students appear to be well adjusted, with ratings well above the mean of 2.5 and with the highest frequencies of responses at 5 for each of the 3 'good adjustment items' – enjoying being with the opposite sex, standing up for what they think is right and usually liking people. Two 'poor adjustment' items – a feeling that people are unfriendly, avoiding facing problems – correspondingly receive the lowest rating. However, we should feel a little concern for the 28 blind students (47.5%) who are 'afraid of a full-fledged disagreement with a person' which is considered a poor adjustment item in the United States. Anyway, this may reflect a Malaysian or Asian mentality rather than that of a visually-handicapped group. There is a need for some help to be given to the 20 students (33.9%) who do not 'enjoy being with the opposite sex' and for the 18 students (32.5%) who 'feel people are unfriendly.'

For Group II items (Table 3), excluding those who abstain from responding to the good adjustment item 'I am considerate', the responses reflect favourable behavioural traits on the part of many of the visually-handicapped sample, i.e. the largest number admit that they are 'easy to get along with' and are 'able to accept criticism'. Moreover, they do not:

(1) feel they are unable to do anything as well as others;
(2) feel unsure of themselves; and
(3) find themselves belittling others in conversation.

That the largest number (22 or 37.3%) have not responded to the statement of 'I am considerate' seems to suggest the Malaysian reluctance and modesty to highlight one's good attributes.

Some potential problem, however, is indicated when 21 visually handicapped students (35.6%) are unable to accept criticism, 15 of them

(25.4%) are not easy to get along with and a similar number feel that they cannot do anything as well as others.

Regarding Group III items (Table 4), the sample comes up top also in the 3 good adjustment items – getting along well with the people around them (54.2%), valuing independence (55.9%) and satisfactory relationship with others (47.5%). Correspondingly, the highest frequency responses fall on the lowest rating for such negative traits as sarcasm (45.8%) and fear of failing (32.2%).

However, guidance is indicated to help the 22 students (37.3%) who have a fear of failing in everything they want to accomplish and for the 14 (23.7%) whose relationships with others are unsatisfactory.

In the case of Group IV items (Table 5), althought the highest number of responses reflect good behavioural traits such as frankness (54.2%), ability to accept responsibility (35.6%) and trusting one's own feelings (42.4%), the responses to these items also reflect some negative aspects such as a tendency to be on guard with people (58.8%), hiding one's own feelings (42.4%) and a dislike to plan and carry things out for themselves (42.4%).

As indicated in Table 6 for Group V items, the most frequent responses reflect three favourable behavioural traits – sincerity (39.0%), they are liked by most people who know them (32.2%) and they are usually in good spirits (33.9%). Correspondingly, the lowest rating goes to envying the happiness that others seem to enjoy (40.7%) and always keeping to themselves (40.7%). The most disturbing finding in this group of item responses is that there are as many students who are 'easily upset' as those who are not – 24 or 40.7%.

For Group VI items (Table 7) and for the first time, all the highest frequency responses fall on the maximum scale for the three positive and three negative items. Desirable traits include an ability to be self-reliant (55.9%), emotionally grown up (37.3%) and feeling relaxed (37.3%). Unfavourable characteristics, as reflected in the students' responses, include the problem of self-control (33.9%), a feeling that they are not getting enough done (49.2%) and they are usually shy (39.0%).

Signs of potential problems are suggested by 9–13 students (15.3%–22.1%) who apparently are unable to be self-reliant, are not emotionally grown up and cannot feel relaxed.

Five out of the six Group VII items (Table 8) elicit the largest number of students who are unable to make up their mind when responding to the questionnaire, varying from 22.0% to 39.0%. However, there are more students showing good adjustment characteristics rather than poor adjustment ones, for example, 27 (45.7%) can usually make up their minds and stick to them compared to 14 (23.7%) who apparently cannot do so; 25 (42.4%) feel that the things they do are worthwhile compared to 11 (18.7%) who do not feel so. Interestingly, 19 students (22.2%) feel they are intelligent and a similar number feel they are not.

Table 2
Frequency of Response to Group I Self-Sort Items (1–6)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
1. I enjoy being with the opposite sex (√).	4 (6.8)	14 (23.7)	6 (10.2)	6 (10.2)	5 (8.5)	24 (40.7)	3.11	1.84	5
2. I feel people are unfriendly.	4 (6.8)	20 (33.9)	9 (15.3)	8 (13.6)	6 (10.2)	12 (20.3)	2.47	1.67	1
3. I stand up for what I think is right (√).	1 (1.7)	10 (16.9)	2 (3.4)	9 (15.3)	3 (5.1)	34 (57.6)	3.78	1.63	5
4. I usually like people (√).	2 (3.4)	8 (13.6)	4 (6.8)	6 (10.2)	4 (6.8)	35 (59.3)	3.81	1.65	5
5. I am afraid of a full-fledged disagreement with a person.	1 (1.7)	16 (27.1)	6 (10.2)	8 (13.6)	5 (8.5)	23 (39.0)	3.16	1.73	5
6. I avoid facing problems.	1 (1.7)	20 (33.9)	4 (6.8)	11 (18.6)	4 (6.8)	19 (32.2)	2.91	1.72	1

Note. (√) denotes good adjustment items and figures in brackets are percentages in Tables 2–11.

Table 3
Frequency of Responses to Group II Self-Sort Items (7–12)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
7. I feel that I can't do anything as well as others can.	1 (1.7)	30 (50.8)	7 (11.9)	6 (10.2)	5 (8.5)	10 (16.9)	2.23	1.59	1
8. I feel unsure of myself.	4 (6.8)	32 (54.21)	6 (10.2)	4 (6.8)	2 (3.4)	11 (18.6)	2.01	1.65	1
9. I am considerate (√).	22 (37.3)	7 (11.9)	1 (1.7)	76 (11.9)	7 (11.9)	15 (25.4)	2.25	2.12	0
10. I am easy to get along with (√).	3 (5.1)	11 (18.6)	4 (6.8)	12 (20.3)	4 (6.8)	25 (42.4)	3.32	1.72	5
11. I find myself belittling others in conversation.	2 (3.4)	27 (45.8)	6 (10.2)	11 (18.6)	3 (5.1)	10 (16.9)	2.27	1.57	1
12. I am able to accept.	2 (3.4)	21 (35.6)	4 (6.8)	5 (8.5)	5 (8.5)	22 (37.3)	2.94	1.85	5

Table 4
Frequency of Responses to Group III Self-Sort Items (13–16)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
13. I get along well with the people around me (√).	1 (1.7)	9 (15.3)	2 (3.4)	8 (13.6)	7 (11.9)	32 (54.2)	3.81	1.57	5
14. The way I feel depends on the mood of those around me.	1 (1.7)	17 (28.8)	6 (10.2)	11 (18.6)	4 (6.8)	20 (33.9)	3.01	1.69	5
15. I value independence (√).	2 (3.4)	5 (8.5)	3 (5.1)	9 (5.3)	7 (11.9)	33 (55.9)	3.91	1.50	5
16. I have a fear of failing in everything I want to accomplish.	2 (3.4)	19 (32.2)	4 (6.8)	12 (20.3)	4 (6.8)	18 (30.5)	2.86	1.72	1
17. My relationships with others are satisfactory (√).	1 (1.7)	11 (18.6)	3 (5.1)	10 (16.9)	6 (10.2)	28 (47.5)	3.57	1.63	5
18. I am sarcastic.		27 (45.8)	9 (15.3)	9 (15.3)	2 (3.4)	12 (20.3)	2.37	1.57	1

Table 5
Frequency of Response to Group IV Self-Sort Items (19–24)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
19. I tend to be on my guard with people.		7 (11.9)	4 (6.8)	12 (20.3)	6 (10.2)	30 (50.8)	3.81	1.43	5
20. I am a frank person (√).	2 (3.4)	4 (6.8)	5 (8.5)	12 (20.3)	4 (6.8)	32 (54.2)	3.83	1.49	5
21. I am able to accept responsibility (√).	1 (1.7)	8 (13.6)	4 (6.8)	20 (33.9)	5 (8.5)	21 (35.6)	3.40	1.46	5
22. I hide my true feelings.	3 (5.1)	8 (13.6)	4 (6.8)	11 (18.6)	8 (13.6)	25 (42.4)	3.49	1.64	5
23. I like to plan and carry things out for myself (√).	4 (6.8)	16 (27.1)	7 (11.9)	7 (11.9)	10 (16.9)	15 (25.4)	2.81	1.73	1
24. I don't trust my own feelings.	2 (3.4)	25 (42.4)	6 (10.2)	10 (16.9)	4 (6.8)	12 (20.3)	2.42	1.64	1

Table 6
Frequency of Response to Group V Self-Sort Items (25–30)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
25. I envy the happiness that others seem to enjoy.		24 (40.7)	3 (5.1)	16 (27.1)	6 (10.2)	10 (16.9)	2.57	1.52	1
26. I am liked by most people who know me (√).	1 (1.7)	10 (16.9)	5 (8.5)	16 (27.1)	8 (13.6)	19 (32.2)	3.30	1.51	5
27. I am sincere (√).	1 (1.7)	8 (13.6)	5 (8.5)	15 (25.4)	7 (11.9)	23 (39.0)	3.49	1.52	5
28. I am easily upset.	2 (3.4)	14 (23.7)	10 (16.9)	9 (15.3)	9 (15.3)	15 (25.4)	2.91	1.62	5
29. I always keep to myself.	1 (1.7)	24 (40.7)	3 (5.1)	11 (18.6)	7 (11.9)	13 (22.0)	2.64	1.65	1
30. I am usually in good spirit (√).	1 (1.7)	9 (15.3)	6 (10.2)	12 (20.3)	11 (18.6)	20 (33.9)	3.4	1.51	5

Table 7
Frequency of Responses to Group VI Self-Sort Items (31–36)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
31. I am able to be self-reliant (√).	–	6 (10.2)	7 (11.9)	8 (13.6)	5 (8.5)	33 (55.9)	3.88	1.45	5
32. Self control is a problem to me.	–	17 (28.8)	6 (10.2)	10 (16.9)	6 (10.2)	20 (33.9)	3.10	1.65	5
33. I feel that I am not getting enough done.	–	8 (13.6)	3 (5.1)	9 (15.3)	10 (16.9)	29 (49.2)	3.83	1.44	5
34. I am emotionally grown up (√).	1 (1.7)	4 (6.8)	5 (8.5)	16 (27.1)	11 (18.6)	22 (37.3)	3.66	1.33	5
35. I feel relaxed (√).	2 (3.4)	7 (11.9)	5 (8.5)	14 (23.7)	9 (15.3)	22 (37.3)	3.47	1.52	5
36. I am usually shy.	2 (3.4)	8 (13.6)	5 (8.5)	10 (16.9)	11 (18.6)	23 (39.0)	3.50	1.56	5

Table 8
Frequency of Responses to Group VII Self-Sort Items (37–42)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
37. I can usually make up my mind and stick to it (√).	2 (3.4)	10 (16.9)	4 (6.8)	16 (27.1)	12 (20.3)	15 (25.4)	3.20	1.50	3
38. I feel that the things I do are worthwhile (√).	2 (3.4)	8 (13.6)	3 (5.1)	21 (35.6)	6 (10.2)	19 (32.2)	3.32	1.49	3
39. I usually seek the advice of others.	1 (1.7)	5 (8.5)	7 (11.9)	12 (20.3)	10 (16.9)	24 (40.7)	3 64	1.42	5
40. It is difficult for me to control my anger.	2 (3.4)	16 (27.1)	5 (8.5)	16 (27.1)	11 (18.6)	9 (15.3)	2.76	1.50	1
41. I often feel resentful.	2 (3.4)	8 (13.6)	9 (15.3)	16 (27.1)	11 (18.6)	13 (22.0)	3.10	1.44	3
42. I feel I am intelligent (√).	3 (5.1)	10 (16.9)	9 (15.3)	18 (30.5)	9 (15.3)	10 (16.9)	2.84	1.46	3

Some feelings of insecurity are indicated since as many as 34 students (47.6%) have admitted that they usually seek the advice of others. It is also disturbing to note that 24 (40.6%) often feel resentful and that 20 (33.9%) have difficulty controlling their anger.

With regard to Group VIII items (Table 9), relatively fewer students have ranked themselves on the maximum scale of 5 on the good adjustment items – 22.0% are optimistic, 20.3% are guided by values and standards of their own and 32.2% are cheerful. What is disturbing is that as many as 26 students (44.1%) often make excuses for themselves and 19 (32.2%) are stubborn.

Responses to Group IX items (Table 10) show favourable behavioural traits. On the maximum scale of 5, 26 students feel confident (44.1%), 18 are able to express their feelings to others (30.5%) and 28 understand themselves (47.5%). Correspondingly, they rate themselves the lowest on feelings of hopelessness (52.5%), putting up a false front (35.6%) and ease of feelings being hurt (25.4%). However, there should be some concern for the 20 students (33.9%) whose feelings are easily hurt, the 15 students (26.4%) who put up false fronts, the 14 students (23.8%) who have a feeling of hopelessness and as many as 16 (27.1%) who apparently are unable to express their feelings to others.

As a group, the visually handicapped students again seem to have fairly good adjustment characteristics in their response to group X items (Table 11). As many as 30 students (50.8%) are likeable, 26 (44.1%) are able to assert themselves and 21 (35.6%) are tactful, compared to the 16, 15 and 16 students respectively who are not. Correspondingly, there are fewer respondents who profess they are nervous persons or who cannot satisfy their friends no matter what they do than those who admit so. Surprisingly, one item out of the 60, 'I can't seem to make up my mind one way or another' receives the largest number of non-responses – 27 or 45.8%.

EFFECTS OF SEX, ETHNICITY, AGE, DEGREE OF VISUAL LOSS AND TYPE OF SCHOOLING ON SELF–CONCEPT

Using the chi-square value as a test of significance (Table 12), it is found that in all the 60 questionnaire items, the obtained frequencies do not indicate that actual population differences exist between students who have total visual loss, light perception only and partial sight. The same is true for the large majority of items in terms of sex, ethnicity, age and type of schooling.

Actual male and female differences exist significantly in only 5 out of the 60 items (percentages based on a rating of '4' and '5'), namely:

Item 12 I am able to accept criticism. (47.5% male, 42.2% female.)
Item 16 I have a fear of failing in everything I want to accomplish. (40.0% male, 31.6% female.)
Item 42 I feel I am intelligent. (22.5% male, 52.7% female.)

Table 9
Frequency of Responses to Group VIII Self-Sort Items (43–48)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
43. I am a stubborn person.	1 (1.7)	17 (28.8)	9 (15.3)	13 (22.0)	4 (6.8)	15 (25.4)	2.79	1.59	1
44. I have little respect for myself.	1 (1.7)	12 (30.3)	5 (8.5)	17 (28.8)	11 (18.6)	13 (22.0)	3.08	1.46	3
45. I am optimistic (√).	2 (3.4)	7 (11.9)	7 (11.9)	22 (37.3)	8 (13.6)	13 (22.0)	3.11	1.39	3
46. I am guided by values and standards of my own (√).	–	10 (16.9)	4 (6.8)	21 (35.6)	12 (20.3)	12 (20.3)	3.20	1.32	3
47. I often make excuses for myself.	1 (1.7)	14 (23.7)	4 (6.8)	14 (23.7)	9 (15.3)	17 (28.8)	3.13	1.58	5
48. I am a cheerful person (√).	1 (1.7)	7 (11.9)	5 (8.5)	21 (25.6)	6 (10.2)	19 (32.2)	3.37	1.41	3

Table 10
Frequency of Responses to Group IX Self-Sort Items (49–54)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
49. I have a feeling of hopelessness.	–	31 (52.5)	6 (10.2)	8 (13.6)	7 (11.9)	7 (11.9)	2.20	1.48	1
50. My feelings are easily hurt.	2 (3.4)	15 (25.4)	8 (13.6)	14 (23.7)	7 (11.9)	13 (22.0)	2.81	1.57	1
51. I put up a false front.	1 (1.7)	21 (35.6)	6 (10.2)	16 (17.1)	5 (8.5)	10 (16.9)	2.55	1.51	1
52. I feel confident (√).	1 (1.7)	6 (10.2)	7 (11.9)	13 (22.0)	6 (10.2)	26 (44.1)	3.61	1.48	5
53. I am able to express my feelings to others (√).	2 (3.4)	10 (16.9)	6 (10.2)	18 (30.5)	5 (8.5)	18 (30.5)	3.15	1.55	3
54. I understand myself (√).	1 (1.7)	9 (15.3)	4 (6.8)	10 (16.9)	7 (11.9)	28 (47.5)	3.64	1.57	5

Table 11
Frequency of Responses to Group X Self-Sort Item (55–60)

Items	Rating						Mean	SD	Mode
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
55. I am tactful (√)	3 (5.1)	11 (18.6)	5 (8.5)	19 (32.2)	8 (13.6)	13 (22.0)	2.96	1.53	3
56. I am likeable (√).	–	10 (16.9)	6 (10.2)	13 (22.0)	11 (18.6)	19 (32.2)	3.39	1.46	5
57. I am able to assert myself (√).	2 (3.4)	10 (16.9)	5 (8.5)	16 (27.1)	9 (15.3)	17 (28.8)	3.20	1.54	5
58. I am a nervous person.	1 (1.7)	12 (20.3)	13 (22.0)	13 (22.0)	9 (15.3)	11 (18.6)	2.84	1.44	2
59. No matter what I do, I can't satisfy my friends.	6 (10.2)	15 (25.4)	8 (13.6)	12 (20.3)	9 (15.3)	9 (15.3)	2.50	1.62	1
60. I can't seem to make up my mind one way or another.	27 (45.8)	7 (11.9)	2 (3.4)	13 (22.0)	2 (3.4)	8 (13.6)	1.66	1.86	0

Table 12
Effects of Sex, Ethnicity, Age, Degree of Visual Loss and Type of Schooling on Self-Concept

Item	Sex With 5 df	Ethnicity 10 df	Age With 10 df	Degree of Visual Loss with 10 df	Type of Schooling with 5 df
1	4.04	7.68	10.04	6.92	10.87
2	1.97	12.71	12.01	7.88	5.56
3	7.41	34.21(x)	9.15	11.44	9.35
4	1.31	19.76(x)	17.28	8.09	5.29
5	6.38	8.10	10.37	12.66	5.43
6	10.35	19.90(x)	6.86	6.06	8.87
7	7.87	15.99	2.61	2.94	7.40
8	1.88	35.19(x)	11.60	13.86	3.36
9	8.59	10.78	4.55	11.11	3.64
10	6.74	6.05	12.03	14.58	2.42
11	9.63	4.03	9.95	11.85	2.54
12	15.79(x)	17.98	8.65	10.64	12.31(x)
13	7.20	14.00	7.31	9.97	7.40
14	2.54	12.92	15.61	6.58	4.44
15	5.26	24.09(x)	7.95	11.21	2.94
16	11.08 (x)	16.97	9.14	12.63	1.71
17	3.73	3.31	10.09	9.46	9.10
18	2.93(a)	7.72(b)	5.42(b)	6.21(b)	9.84(a)(x)
19	1.31(a)	11.40(b)	6.28(b)	7.39(b)	4.11(a)
20	2.11	14.08	8.97	9.43	6.14
21	3.18	7.18	10.19	9.50	6.47
22	3.19	10.34	12.77	14.44	3.56
23	5.12	10.34	8.21	6.70	2.38
24	6.66	3.70	18.81(x)	10.90	2.84
25	2.58(a)	7.76(b)	10.83(b)	6.37(b)	10.45(a)(x)
26	1.60	4.07	14.88	14.23	4.63
27	7.63	5.23	17.07	14.92	7.01
28	2.35	9.69	8.07	4.71	3.08
29	3.10	12.94	5.73	7.39	3.35
30	3.12	12.06	6.56	12.42	5.36
31	2.05(a)	15.86(b)(x)	6.71(b)	7.97(b)	2.40(a)
32	4.63(a)	3.90(b)	8.56(b)	8.03(b)	4.24(a)

Table 12 (contd.)

Item	Sex With 5 df	Ethnicity 10 df	Age With 10 df	Degree of Visual Loss with 10 df	Type of Schooling with 5 df
33	3.35[a]	23.86[b][x]	9.07[b]	2.15[b]	3.63[a]
34	1.93	9.60	9.34	5.64	8.65
35	4.39	13.12	17.70	13.63	3.89
36	10.29	18.59[x]	5.75	9.61	5.66
37	6.32	12.71	5.01	8.00	4.09
38	5.05	4.64	9.45	6.96	2.71
39	5.83	6.73	14.55	10.52	10.03
40	3.16	6.90	11.01	5.80	3.08
41	8.25	10.32	6.32	16.02	7.55
42	11.36[x]	8.86	9.32	9.98	7.52
43	6.20	17.27	7.95	12.22	4.77
44	4.95	12.78	8.68	7.82	2.77
45	5.78	9.96	8.32	7.65	6.47
46	6.76[a]	14.93[b]	11.60[b]	7.23	0.76[a]
47	1.90	6.75	10.68	15.70	1.68
48	4.43	4.65	9.37	8.32	3.19
49	17.77[a][x]	10.44[b]	6.25[b]	7.54[b]	10.28[a][x]
50	7.26	11.20	9.61	10.53	4.48
51	2.77	11.42	6.59	10.72	7.73
52	2.63	13.48	8.39	12.06	4.56
53	4.74	7.96	8.58	8.24	8.15
54	2.23	22.51[x]	6.30	12.90	6.49
55	13.03[x]	9.46	10.92	16.75	7.16
56	2.29[a]	7.38[b]	5.77[b]	8.11[b]	0.88[a]
57	6.64	8.69	14.66	6.59	2.68
58	5.66	6.49	7.35	14.18	1.31
59	7.33	10.86	12.92	12.41	2.59
60	2.51	4.63	14.26	12.32	6.25

Notes. (x) = Significant at .05 level of confidence.
(a) = 4df.
(b) = 8df.

Item 49 I have a feeling of hopelessness. (15.0% male, 42.1% female.)
Item 55 I am tactful. (43.0% male, 15.8% female.)

In the case of ethnicity, there are significant differences between the Malays and the Chinese in the following 9 items (percentages based on a rating of '4' and '5'):

Item 3 I stand up for what I think is right. (68.1% Malays, 45.5% Chinese.)
Item 4 I usually like people. (72.4% Malays, 45.5% Chinese.)
Item 6 I avoid facing problems. (44.7% Malays, 18.2% Chinese.)
Item 8 I feel unsure of myself. (25.5% Malays, 0% Chinese.)
Item 15 I value independence. (63.8% Malays, 90.9% Chinese.)
Item 31 I am able to be self-reliant. (61.7% Malays, 72.7% Chinese.)
Item 33 I feel I am not getting enough done. (68.1% Malays, 63.7% Chinese.)
Item 36 I am usually shy. (55.4% Malays, 72.8% Chinese.)
Item 54 I understand myself. (57.5% Malays, 72.8% Chinese.)

In terms of age groups, there is only one item that elicits a significant difference, namely, 'I don't trust my own feelings' (16.7% aged 12–14 years; 19.4% aged 15–17 years and 47.0% aged 18–20 years have rated this item '4' and '5').

Significant differences also seem to appear in the responses from those who study in the Setapak Residential Secondary School for the Blind (Group X) compared to those who study in regular sighted secondary schools (Group Y) in the following 4 items (percentages are derived from '4' and '5' ratings):-

Item 12 I am able to accept criticism. (44.70% Group X, 47.6% Group Y.)
Item 18 I am sarcastic. (31.5% Group X, 9.6% Group Y.)
Item 25 I envy the happiness that others seem to enjoy. (23.7% Group X, 33.4% Group Y.)
Item 55 I have a feeling of hopelessness. (13.1% Group X, 42.9% Group Y.)

The data above confirms the view that there are pros and cons in integrated education, that is, educating the blind side by side with sighted students in regular schools. On the one hand, there is a higher proportion of such students who are able to accept students and a smaller percentage who are sarcastic but on the other, a higher proportion of them appear to envy the happiness of others and have a feeling of hopelessness. This has important implications for the government in its efforts to expand educational facilities for the visually handicapped.

SELF-CONCEPT DISCREPANCY

As proposed by Rogers (1951),[12] psychological adjustment exists when one's concept of oneself is roughly congruent with one's experiences. Similarly, good adjustment is characterised by a self-concept which is not very removed from one's concept of the way one would like to be. If these two concepts are grossly inconsistent with each other, the individual will experience heightened conflict and tension and thus may be maladjusted.

The difference in scores in each of the 60 self-sort and ideal-sort items of each of the 59 visually handicapped students has been calculated manually and summarised in Table 13. There is a wide range of discrepancy scores, ranging from 12 to 131, suggesting that the sampled group is

Table 13
Discrepancy Scores Between Self-Sort and Ideal-Sort Items in Terms of Range, Mean and Standard Deviation

Sex	Highest	Lowest	R	M	SD
Male N = 40	131	12	119	73.25	27.92
Female N = 19	105	43	62	73.52	3.74
Total N = 59	131	12	119	73.34	23.06

a very heterogeneous one with a mean of 73.34 and a standard deviation of 23.06. Surprisingly, the range and standard deviation in discrepancy scores for the female students are much smaller than those for the male students, reflecting differential home background and/or social interaction.

Considering students with discrepancy scores of less than one standard deviation as 'normal' and those above one standard deviation as abnormal, there are only 12 or 22.0% cases as summarised in Table 14 with 5.5 times more males than females. Not only are there more male students having adjustment problems, they seem to have more severe problems as suggested by the two male students with discrepancy scores of more than two standard deviations. As these two are extreme cases, it may be fruitful to examine in some detail the nature of the problem. Only individual items with a maximum discrepancy score of '4' will be cited.

Table 14
Frequence of Discrepancy Scores Between Self-Sort and Ideal-Sort Items in Terms of Standard Deviation (±1 DS = ±23.06)

Number of Standard Deviations	Male	Female	Subtotal
> 1 SD but < 2 SD	9 (22.5)	2 (10.5)	11 (18.6)
> 2 SD but < 3 SD	2 (5.0)	0	2 (3.4)
> 3 SD	0	0	0
Subtotal	11 (27.5)	2 (10.5)	13 (22.0)
Sample Total	40	19	59

Note. Figures in brackets are percentages of the sample total.

Case 1

This is a male Bumiputra student, aged 15–17 years old in Form II. He is partially sighted and lives and studies in the special residential school for the blind. His behavioural traits with potential problems for adjustment include:

(1) Does not enjoy being with the opposite sex.
(2) Fear of failing in everything he wants to accomplish.
(3) A tendency to be on his guard with people.
(4) Unable to accept responsibility.
(5) A feeling that the things he does are not worthwhile.
(6) Is not a cheerful person.
(7) Does not feel confident.
(8) Is not tactful.
(9) Unable to assert himself.
(10) Conflict over ease of getting along with others, criticism, not getting enough done, shyness, making excuses for oneself, feelings of hopelessness and nervousness.

Case 2

This case is also a male Bumiputra aged 15–17 years in Form III, with light perception only, studying and staying in the same residential school for the blind. His problem areas include:

(1) Avoiding facing problems.
(2) A feeling that he cannot do anything as well as others can.

(3) Cannot get along well with the people around him.
(4) His relationships with others are not satisfactory.
(5) A tendency to be on his guard with people.
(6) Being frank.
(7) A dislike to plan and carry things out for himself.
(8) Sincerity.
(9) Is easily upset.
(10) Always keeps to himself.
(11) Has problems of self-control.
(12) A feeling that he is not getting enough done.
(13) Difficult for him to control his temper.
(14) Stubbornness.
(15) Often makes excuses for himself.
(16) Conflict over self-reliance, emotional maturity, worthwhileness of doing things, relaxation, one's values and standards, cheerfulness, feelings of confidence, expression of feelings to others, understanding oneself and self-assertion.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This study seems to suggest that the visually-handicapped students as a group do not appear to have serious emotional-social problems. It is clear that there are more students professing favourable behavioural traits than unfavourable traits. Nevertheless, there exists a sufficient number of individuals who seem to experience some adjustment problems which warrant remedial action.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

(1) The students at the school be informed about the general results of this study.
(2) They be reminded to strive towards achieving good adjustment traits and discarding poor adjustment traits.
(3) As a short-term measure, teachers and house parents at the school be made aware of the findings of this survey so that they can better guide their students towards a more favourable emotional-social development,
(4) As a long-term measure, a counsellor with professional background in guidance and counselling and in educating the visually handicapped be appointed as part of the school establishment.
(5) This study be extended to cover a similar sample of sighted students to determine whether there are major group and/or individual differences.

CONCLUSION

This study can only be described as exploratory. The results may be more revealing if the sample is larger. There are other dimensions of emotional-social adjustment that other researchers may like to look into, such as attitudes towards blindness, child-rearing practices and the effects of residential schooling and open integrated system.

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A Study of Contradictions Within the Self-Concept of Mentally Retarded Children **

Vasantha R. Patri

The family affects the child's self-evaluation. Confusing experiences in the family will hamper proper self-evaluation resulting in the child having an unstable and inconsistent view of himself. This will consequently affect adjustment. While a normal child can be expected to overcome some of these contradictions eventually by virtue of his own increased intellectual maturity and experiences, a retarded child, by virtue of his limited intellectual abilities and restrictive environmental exposure, suffers a double deficit from which he has no escape route.

This study aims at investigating (1) the differences in self-concept between normal and retarded children (2) extent of contradictions within retarded and normal children and (3) the relationship between extent of contradictions within the self-concept and level of intelligence. The subjects were from the low socio-economic class and their ages ranged from 8 to 20 years of age.

The self-concept was measured by the Dutta Self-Concept Scale (Hindi version). This scale consists of dichotomous, discontinuous items which appear in pairs and covers physical, intellectual and socio-emotional self. The reliability of the scale, as assessed by split-half method, was 0.73. The parallel form validity measure yielded a correction of 0.47. Contradiction scores were obtained by computing the differences between the pairs of items.

Analysis of the data reveal the following findings:

(1) Significant differences in self-concept between normal and retarded subject were established although retarded children tended to

evaluate themselves more negatively. The majority of the children in both groups tended to view themselves in a mental fashion.

(2) Contradictions in the self-concept of retarded children were significantly greater than normal children.

(3) Degree of contradiction was negatively related to level of intelligence.